

Applicant Name Bitter Root Irrigation District (BRID)
Project Name Dry Gulch Siphon, Phase 3

Project Abstract

The BRID conducted a formal benefit analysis study of the Dry Gulch Siphon project under Phase 2 of the Renewable Resources grant 04-1220. The conclusion is that installation of an underground siphon, irrigating 355 acres, with automated sensors/controls, which will eliminate 2.94 miles of unlined canal, will improve the administration and management of irrigation water, improve infrastructure, enhance water quality, and conserve natural resources. The purpose of this grant, Phase 3, is to implement to construction of the siphon. Implementation will result in the following:

Improved management and stewardship of the renewable resource:

- A total of 2.94 miles of unlined canal will be replaced with a buried pipe siphon and automated sensors/controls;
- An estimated 892 acre-feet of water per irrigation season will be conserved;
- Less diversion from Como Lake and Lost Horse Creek is possible, leaving more for fish, wildlife, and recreation;
- Water quality improvement will be a result of less excess water at the end of the canal system;
- Better tailwater management will reduce sedimentation and erosion in the Three Mile area; and
- Annual operation and maintenance cost-savings of \$10,455 could be applied toward other improvements.

Measurable conservation of irrigation water:

- Automated remote sensors/controls will be integrated into the BRID's existing Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system, and
- Automatic gate position control will be based on the water level/flow at the siphon.

Development and expansion of services:

- A water connection point will be included on the siphon for the Three Mile Fire Department. The Dry Gulch area is not currently served by any underground water distribution system for fire protection.

Citizen benefits:

- Improved services and infrastructure;
- Water conservation;
- Water quality improvement; and
- Benefits to include agriculturalists, fisheries, wildlife, and recreation facilities.